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*Seventh Meeting, Monday, February 25th*, 1861.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, VICE-PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*Captain Chas. Duncan Cameron; Edmund Gabriel; Nathaniel Gould; Wm. Bosville James; and Julius Reuter, Esqrs., were presented upon their election.*

ELECTIONS.—*Captain H. B. Carter; Lord Colville; Commander C. Golding Constable*, I.N.; *Dr. Thomson, Provost of Queen's College, Oxford; and W. Blackney; C. C. Bowen; W. C. Knight Clowes; R. Kerr Dick*, B.C.S.; *A. Gilliat; H. Hardinge*, M.D.; *T. Hawksley*, C.E.; *A. Steinmetz Kennard; L. Mackinnon; W. Napier; A. Adams Reilly; E. Wynn Roberts; E. Schenley; J. Sidney Smith; A. J. R. Stewart; and E. Webster, Esqrs., were elected Fellows.*

ACCESSIONS.—Among the accessions to the Library and Map Rooms since the former meeting were—Mackay's Manual of Modern Geography; Transactions of the Royal Society of Tasmania; Landsberg's Map of Queensland, Australia; Continuation of Ordnance Survey Maps, &c. &c.

Before reading the Paper of the evening—

The CHAIRMAN said, as he had invariably taken the deepest interest in the exploration of the interior of Africa, and had often, as former President of the Society, to speak in commendation of the various distinguished travellers who have from time to time made us acquainted with large regions unknown to our ancestors, so it was well known to the Society, as well as to himself, that the African subject which has most recently absorbed our attention is the expedition under Captain Speke, who is now on his journey from Zanzibar to that Lake Nyanza Victoria which he discovered when associated with Captain Burton, and from the northern end of which he hopes to trace the source of the Nile. But when the gallant captain brought before us his project, he was most imperfectly acquainted with the very great difficulties he would have to encounter even if he reached the northern extremity of the Lake Nyanza, in having to cross a broad, wild region, inhabited by savage tribes of negroes, who dwell above the highest cataracts of the Nile. To aid him in this effort, there was, however, happily for him and for the progress of geographical science, a gentleman on leave of absence in this country, who, having been our Vice-Consul in Soudan and many years a resident in that region, had made explorations up the western branches of the White Nile, and who had gone northwards to Gondokoro towards the lake discovered by Speke. Consul Petherick was that individual, and he (the Chairman) was persuaded he was the only European who, from his great experience and his influence over the natives, could afford real assistance to Captains Speke and Grant in their endeavour to solve the great problem of all time as to the real sources of the Nile. When he presided over the meeting of the geographers and ethnologists at the last meeting of the British Association at Oxford, he invited all his friends to unite in subscribing such a sum of money as would enable Mr. Petherick to purchase grain enough to succour the party of Speke and Grant when they arrived from the south, Petherick himself engaging to proceed beyond Gondokoro to meet the explorers. To the honour of the Royal Geographical Society, it has realized through private subscription upwards of 1000*l.*

for this noble object; and as Consul Petherick is about to proceed immediately to his post at Khartum, and thence to carry out their behests, the Chairman was sure the Society would rejoice to wish him every success, whilst they were all quite certain that in the heart of Africa, and in overcoming all difficulties, Consul Petherick is truly "the right man in the right place." And as Mrs. Petherick is to accompany him, he felt confident that, with the same spirit of geographical research which animates the ladies who have honoured us with their presence, she would warmly second and support the resolve of her daring and distinguished husband.

MR. CONSUL PETHERICK said the President had so well described the difficulties that lay in the way of Captain Speke's progress from Lake Nyanza to the Nile that it was unnecessary for him to add more. It was only reserved for him to assure the Geographical Society that he would do the utmost in his power to carry out their object of effecting a meeting with Captain Speke. Naturally, any Englishman situated as he would be in those regions, hearing of the coming of a countryman, would do his utmost to see him; therefore he took no merit to himself for promising to do that. The circulars of the Royal Geographical Society in connection with his expedition pointed out that there was a wish that he should proceed towards the sources of the Nile, provided Captain Speke did not succeed in discovering them. For carrying out such an expedition as that the sum of 2000*l.* would be required, as has been stated in the circular. However, little more than half of that sum had been subscribed, which would only suffice for carrying out the first part of the project of the Society, namely, that of meeting Captain Speke and supplying him with grain and other necessaries. In case he did not meet with the Captain at Gondokoro, he purposed proceeding into the interior in order to bring about the meeting.

SIR RODERICK MURCHISON then called upon M. Du Chaillu to read the remarkable communication which he was about to make to the meeting. He had had the pleasure of M. Du Chaillu's acquaintance since he arrived in this country, and he had been impressed with the deepest respect for his acquirements and his unbounded activity. As a traveller, M. Du Chaillu had realized for them a knowledge of a large portion of the equatorial Western region of Africa, of which they were previously entirely ignorant.

The Paper read was—

## *The Geographical Features and Natural History of a hitherto unexplored region of Western Africa.*

By PAUL B. DU CHAILLU, of New York.

The singular region of Africa explored by M. Du Chaillu during the four years, 1856, 7, 8, and 9, lies within 2° on either side of the equator, and extends from the western coast to an estimated distance of 400 miles into the interior. It is characterised by mountains covered with forests of tropical richness, and traversed by many rivers. Instead of the thinly wooded and sparsely watered plains of many parts of Africa, or marshy plateaux such as are found elsewhere, the explorer is involved in a jungle of extreme density, through which he cannot penetrate except by following the tracks of wild beasts, or the miserable paths kept open by the natives from one village to another, or else by hewing his way. Wild animals are so scarce, though of numerous and novel species, that the traveller is unable to supply himself with sufficient game for sub-